



# NEWS RELEASE

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### ***SBA HONORS NATION'S BEST DURING SMALL BUSINESS WEEK: MAY 6-12***

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) will honor America's top entrepreneurs – and name the *National Small Business Person of the Year* for 2001 – during ceremonies in Washington, D.C. marking National Small Business Week.

The celebration in Washington, D.C., on May 7-9, culminates a series of events in local communities across the nation to honor state winners in anticipation of National Small Business Week. This year's celebration theme, "A History of Success, A Millennium of Opportunity," captures the entrepreneurial spirit of these exceptional small business owners. The selection of the winners is based not only on the financial success of the business but also on its staying power, employee growth, innovativeness, and creative solutions. The winners are also chosen for their involvement with their communities.

The SBA celebration, to be held at the Renaissance Washington Hotel, will feature the award ceremonies and presentations by notable speakers from industry and government on issues of vital interest to the small business community. A national *Small Business Person of the Year* and two runners-up are selected from the 53 state *Small Business Persons of the Year*, representing a winner from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam. The winners represent a diverse cross-section of America in terms gender, ethnicity, background, and types of business.

It is estimated that 25.5 million small businesses in America employ more than half the country's private work force, create three of every four new jobs, and generate a majority of American innovations. Recognizing the importance of small business to our nation's economy, every U.S. president for 38 years has issued an annual proclamation marking Small Business Week.

*Small Business Advocates* are also honored. These awards recognize individuals who have been advocates of minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned small businesses. In addition, awards go to a small business journalist and accounting and financial services representatives who contribute to small business development.

A list of state winners and small business advocates is available on the SBA Web site at <http://smallbusinesssuccess.sba.gov/>.

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In the special awards category, the *Phoenix Awards* recognize a public official, a business owner, and a volunteer whose efforts and contributions enabled a business or community to recover following a disaster. The SBA gives this award as part of its role as the nation's banker in times of disaster for homeowners, renters, and businesses of all sizes.

Additional special awards honor the *SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year*, *Small Business Exporter of the Year* and the *SBA Entrepreneurial Success Award* winner. The latter award is presented to a company that has developed into a large business with SBA assistance. The National *SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) Chapter of the Year* will also be honored.

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*For more information about all of SBA's programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640. Also visit the SBA's extensive Web site at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).*

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